



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 25, 2011

No. 112

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC.

July 25, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN CAMPBELL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

A WEEK IN POLITICAL WONDERLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We begin another week in political wonderland. The Dow falls 100 points at the opening bell. What is it that we should do?

Well, if we had the knowledge and problem-solving skills of average college sophomore economic students, or women in a church study group, before the week is out, we would take some simple steps.

First, we would understand that, in a divided government with real economic challenges, no one group is allowed, especially those representing a minority opinion, to have their way entirely.

Then, we would begin by repealing the silly debt ceiling limitation, a law that was enacted in 1917 when the United States was about to embark upon a borrowing binge in World War I. It was used to look like we were fiscally responsible, a charade that we have done dozens of times since.

The fact is, these are debts we've already incurred, and the United States will honor them. What sort of theatrics are we going to go through until we finally own up?

Next, we would actually deal with the twin challenges of unsustainable spending and tax cuts along with the need to restore our economy and compete in a global business environment.

In an ideal world, my Republican friends would use their opportunity over the next 10 weeks to actually show how they would control spending in a way that is possible within the political process. In fact, they would have two opportunities between now and the election to actually shut down the government, if they didn't get their way, to highlight that effort.

We would also deal with a real consensus on things like military spending. There's broad agreement across party lines. For example, why shouldn't we, more than a half century after the end of World War II, 22 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, bring those troops home from Europe? Of course we can do that, and it's a start of many things that would help us restore balance to our military spending.

Next, we can deal meaningfully with our health care costs. Many parts of the United States spend far less money for Medicaid, Medicare than the high-spending areas. We know how to do this and, in fact, those low-spending,

high value areas provide better quality health care. Let's use the power of the Health Care Reform Act to accelerate those reforms and spread them around America, saving money and improving the quality of care.

Turn to the Tax Code. The American public would support a modest reasonable tax reform that would actually raise some revenue by closing unjustified tax loopholes and be able to deal with fairness and simplicity. More people would actually pay their taxes. We would have more revenue, and there would be more confidence in the system.

We should deal with our infrastructure deficit, something that doesn't get as much attention around here as it should. We have a serious deficiency in terms of basic infrastructure, transportation, sewer, water, trillions of dollars of a deficit that is building, undermining our competitiveness in a global economy. We would have modest user fees to support needed improvement, together with intelligent use of credit that would put hundreds of thousands of people to work, strengthening not just the economy, but improving our health and our global competitiveness.

We would reform agricultural spending. Those college students could figure out what the experts have told us: that we can actually provide more support for America's farmers and ranchers, improve the environment, put more resources into nutrition for our children in schools, all the time strengthening American agriculture, saving money. This isn't rocket science.

Finally, we would launch a very public American process on how to strengthen Social Security; protect that lifeline for our seniors in a way that brings people together rather than divides them. Any Rotary Club with 10 people, an Internet connection and a sheet of butcher paper could come up with one, two or three alternatives that would solve the problem over the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H5401

next 50 years and would be acceptable to the American public.

This doesn't have to be so hard. It doesn't need to risk knocking the economy into another tailspin. Done right, we can meet our real challenges in a way that puts us on a sustainable economic path. We can rebuild and renew America, and unite our country to meet our challenges ahead.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

Please hear our prayers for the Members of this assembly, upon whom the authority of government is given. Help them to understand the tremendous responsibility they have to represent both their constituencies and the people of this great Nation of ours.

This is a great but complex task. Grant them as well the gift of wisdom to sort through what competing interests might exist to work a solution that can serve all of the American people.

Finally, give each Member peace and equanimity and give all Americans generosity of heart to understand that governance is not simple but difficult work, at times requiring sacrifice and forbearance.

May all that is done within the people's House this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CLAY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANOTHER AMERICAN MURDERED IN MEXICO

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Mexican bandits have killed yet another American. The reason: His family couldn't come up with the \$10,000 ransom.

Jorge Dieppa was a court translator for the Federal court in El Paso, Texas. He also was a lecturer at UTEP. Dieppa had gone to Juarez to get his car fixed, but he was kidnapped on July 6. When his relatives didn't pay the ransom, he was murdered. He was found bound with duct tape after being stabbed repeatedly.

Juarez is the border city of death. Thousands of Mexicans have been murdered there as well as several Americans. Rogue bandits and drug cartels rule the city. They rein terror on people through violence, racketeering, extortion, robbery, kidnapping, and drug deals.

The violence in "death city" is not the only border town with an atmosphere of outlawry. Other border towns such as Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros are dangerous for honest persons. Violence in Mexico affects the U.S. border towns with the cross-border crime, including reports of Americans with Spanish surnames being kidnapped and held for ransom.

Failure to realize that crime in "death city" and other Mexican border towns is real and expanding is to live like Alice in Wonderland.

And that's just the way it is.

AMERICA NEEDS WHITE HOUSE LEADERSHIP

(Mr. BROOKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROOKS. During Barack Obama's 2 years as a freshman Senator, America's debt increased \$400 billion. During Obama's next 2 years in the Senate majority, America's debt increased another \$1.8 trillion. As President, Barack Obama drove up America's debt another \$3 trillion. In Barack Obama's time in Washington, America's debt load has increased by more

than \$5 trillion. That's a 50 percent increase in just 6 years.

Do you see the pattern? The longer Obama is in Washington, the worse America's debt and the weaker America becomes.

What is President Obama's solution? Obama submits record-high budgets to Congress that continue Washington's unsustainable spending binge. Obama demands a debt ceiling increase with no spending cuts.

Mr. President, America needs White House leadership. If you have a written solution to this debt crisis, please submit it. The American people deserve no less.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL). The gentleman is reminded to address his remarks to the Chair.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 22, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 22, 2011 at 3:28 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. Res. 234.

That the Senate passed S. 300.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

□ 1210

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. LANDRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANDRY. Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity this weekend to go home to Louisiana, which I enjoyed doing. I heard from a State senator of mine who is also a banker. He said that he had a gentleman come in his office this weekend, asking for some more money on his loan. He said, Well, in order to do that, you have to give us some more information. We have to see your debt-to-income ratio—your assets versus your liabilities. So, after looking at that, he explained to him that, if the ratio doesn't work, he can't lend him any more money.

If you were to plug in that same ratio of what our Federal regulators are requiring of our financial institutions when they look upon the American people and American businesses, you would find that if we put that same set